BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

REGULAR MEETING

Monday, June 9, 2003

Present: June Bailey, Dennis Brunner, Colleen Craig, Glen Dey, Janet Miller, M.S.

Mitchell

Also Present: Joe and Tina Robinson; Kathy Dittmer - Riverside Citizens Association (RCA);

Jay Newton, Budget Office; and Doug Kupper, Larry Hoetmer, Tim Martz and

Maryann Crockett (staff)

President Bailey called the meeting to order at approximately 3:35 p.m. The minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 12, 2003, were reviewed and approved as corrected.

1. <u>Donation – Leon Robinson Park Development Fund</u>. President Bailey mentioned the dedication of the Leon Robinson Park in May and introduced Joe Robinson, the son of former Park Board member and City employee Leon Robinson. Joe Robinson stated that on behalf of the Robinson family he wanted to thank the Park Board for dedicating a park in honor of his father Leon Robinson. He said his Dad loved his job with the Park Department and thought that he would be very proud to know that the Department thought enough of his efforts to name a park in his own neighborhood after him.

Mr. Robinson introduced his wife Tina and commented that they would like to donate \$5,000 towards development of the park. In addition, he said his mother, Pauline Robinson, had donated \$2,500 towards park development for a total of \$7,500. He said he understood there was a matching fund program and that the family would like to see the donated funds used for construction of a picnic shelter. He concluded by saying that he and his wife would like to be actively involved with development of the park.

Director Kupper thanked Mr. Robinson for the donations and commented that a special restricted account would be established to hold the funds for future park development.

OFF AGENDA ITEM

On motion by Mitchell, second by Niernberger, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED that the rules be set aside and that an item be taken up off the agenda concerning board appointments.

• Director Kupper reminded board members that although their appointments expired June 30, 2003, (with the exception of Dennis Brunner who was appointed in April 2003) they were required to continue to serve as Park Board members until a new appointment was made by their respective City Council member.

Director Kupper presented Certificates of Appreciation to Board Member M.S. "Mitch" Mitchell, First Vice President Trix Niernberger, Board Member Janet Miller, Board Member Colleen Craig,

Second Vice President Glen Dey, and President June Bailey for their dedication and efforts as volunteer members of the Board of Park Commissioners.

Representing the Park Board, President Bailey, presented Certificates of Appreciation to staff members Tim Martz, Larry Hoetmer, Maryann Crockett, Director Kupper and Mike North. She thanked staff for their efforts on behalf of the Board and commented on how partnerships and working together can overcome any obstacle.

M.S. Mitchell spoke briefly about changes he has witnessed in the Department during the past eight years he has served as a board member based on the direction of three different Department Directors. He stated that although he and Director Kupper have not always agreed, he respected Director Kupper's dedication to the City of Wichita and the park system.

2. <u>Discussion of Riverside Park Contract Items</u>. M.S. Mitchell stated that he had reviewed the bid document and visited with the main contractor for the project. He said the Riverside Park System Master Plan project was initiated in September 1993. He said the original budget was \$10,000,000; however, that was subsequently reduced to \$5,000,000 when funds were cut from the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) budget.

Mitchell briefly reviewed the bid document as follows: \$1,000,000 for roundabouts; \$461,300 for art projects (\$241,000 of which went towards electrical lamps around celebration plaza); \$500,000 for electrical work; and \$500,000 in stonework, much of which went into the restoration of the arch. He added that the materials for the strolling path changed in order to better blend in with the other stonework design. He also commented on the three large stationary picnic tables (totaling approximately \$27,000) and the gazebo, which the contractor indicated was basically a gift. He concluded by saying that he thought the project got "skewed" in terms of what the contractors were able to accomplish in comparison to the original project design, but added that it was the general consensus that it was the best bid the City could get for the project. He also stated that after reviewing the bid document, his concerns regarding the project had been satisfied. He added that he hoped this would be considered Phase 1 of the project.

Director Kupper commented that the CIP Committee had not reconvened to discuss the 2003-2013 program due to the City's current budget crisis. He indicated that when the committee eventually met, it was his intent to try to gain support to reinstate the \$5,000,000 into the Riverside project. He also indicated that the Murdock Street bridge roundabout was scheduled to open next Monday, June 16. There was brief discussion concerning the project completion date.

3. <u>Budget Review</u>. Jay Newton, Budget Office, referred board members to a PowerPoint presentation on the City's 2003 Adopted Budget, which showed Revenues of \$358,495,670 and Expenses of \$354,301,280.

Newton briefly commented on the State's fiscal crisis and how it affected the City's funding. He reviewed various funds such as governmental funds, special revenue funds, enterprise funds and internal service funds. He also reviewed tax revenue sources such as property/vehicle taxes, local sales taxes, franchise fees, assessments, user fees/rent, and gas tax.

Newton referred board members to a pie chart of expenses by function, which reflected 52% for public safety, 20% to public works and 11% to parks. He briefly reviewed expenses by category which reflected wages/benefits as the highest; followed by utilities, contract street maintenance and subsidies. He commented that given current budget trends, they project the City's general fund reserves to drop from \$17.8 million in 2003 to \$2.5 million in 2005.

Newton said future budget development issues would include the economy, demand transfers, growth, governing body transition and wages and benefits. He specifically referred to the upcoming union negotiations once the current union contract expires at the end of the year.

Responding to a question from Mitchell concerning possible fee increases, Director Kupper explained that the City Council had discussed establishing a task force to look into park and recreation fees. He mentioned the research done by Management Partners regarding 100% cost recovery. Mitchell asked which programs had the largest number of participants. Director Kupper responded that more individuals participated in the department's athletic programs.

There was general discussion regarding the purpose of the park and recreation department and the fact that park programs were not originally designed to make a profit, but rather to meet the needs of the underprivileged. It was the general consensus of the Board that the question was how much elected officials were willing to subsidize. Several options discussed were raising the mill levy and increased fees for non-residents.

President Bailey asked if the department utilized grant applications and who completed them for the department? Director Kupper indicated that the department had been pretty successful with grant applications in the past; however, that was before the department lost one third of its management team. He indicated that he planned to assign the task to the new assistant director when that person is hired.

Mitchell referred to the small fee increase in soccer fees several years ago and added that the increase did not even come close to offsetting increased maintenance costs. Niernberger commented that it was difficult to increase fees, even slightly, when groups went to the media. She suggested that some of the more vocal groups be invited to participate in the fee task force and that the task force work closely with the media to explain their purpose and goals. She said the school board set a good example of how to accomplish that with the bond issue by providing extensive media coverage to raise the public's awareness of what they were proposing. Newton commented that 100% cost recovery was probably not an attainable target.

- 4. <u>Director's Update</u>. Director Kupper reported briefly on the following items:
 - <u>Wildwood Park and Chautauqua Park Dedications</u>. Both park dedications took place as planned Saturday, June 7, 2003.
 - <u>Pesticide Free Park Signs</u>. Trix Niernberger asked if the signs were installed at all ten pesticide free parks. Director Kupper said he could verify the Big Arkansas River and West Millbrook Parks, but said he would have to check with staff and report back to the Board.

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- <u>Summer of Discovery</u>. Said that although enrollment was good, it was not as high as it was last year at the same time.
- <u>Swimming Pools</u>. Commented that the department was down \$5,000 in swimming lesson revenue compared to the same time last year. There was discussion concerning impact of the recent inclement weather. Director Kupper added that pool hours have also been reduced.
- <u>Transportation Grant Funds</u>. Janet Miller mentioned the possibility of receiving transportation grant fund monies for development of greenways along the abandoned railroad corridor. There was discussion regarding the proposed corridor adjacent to West Kellogg.

The Board briefly discussed the possibility of holding a future meeting at the new water treatment plant located in Herman Hill Park. It was the general consensus to table that suggestion until the July meeting and/or the appointment of new board members.

Janet Miller handed out a flyer about the "Great Outdoors Days' at Exploration Place on Sunday, June 22, 2003, from 10:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. She said admission was free and invited all board members to attend.

Kathy Dittmer, President, RCA, handed out a flyer about the RCA's "July 4th Pancake Breakfast and Children's Parade" and other activities at Exploration Place on Friday, July 4, 2003. She invited board members to attend and mentioned that all proceeds would go to support the Kansas Wildlife Exhibit, which would receive no City funding after 2003. Director Kupper commented that the Exhibit was funded through 2004.

There being no	further business,	the meeting	adiourned	at approximately	v 5:15 p.m.
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	June Bailey, President	
ATTEST:		
Maryann Crockett, Clerk Recording Secretary		